

December 13, 1975

Are there groovy guys and groovy gals. This hip, swinging bag Black Hole, and it's published every third Saturday at Douglas Reiff, 67 Grosvenor Rd., Denmore, N. Y. 14223. Subs are going for the incredibly cheap rate of 7/\$1.00, but are liable to go up if the postage rates rise. Trades are very welcome. All games that are being run here are protected by DNY:PA.

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Back issues available are 1-3, 10-12, and 14-today, not to mention Etacoin Shrdlu 1, and are all available for postage. Not everybody at once or anything.

Note please that the deadline for the games is four weeks away. Two reasons for this--1) I don't think I'll really feel like getting this thing together about the turn of the year (bi-centennial year is finally coming) and 2) Postal service really gets lousy about now. What can I say?

But in the good news department the Canadian postal strike is finally over, which means...

1975 02

Summer 1904

IT'S ABOUT TIME

AUSTRIA (Birsan): Has A War, A Gal, A Bud Owns Bud, Rum, Ser (3)
 ENGLAND (Rubins): Has A Stp Owns Stp (1)
 FRANCE (McDonough): Has A Bur, A Mar, A Par, A Pic, A Wal, F Lon, F Bre, F Sly Owns Bel, Bre, Liv, Lon, Mar, Par, Por, Spa (8)
 GERMANY (Zimmermann): Has A Gas, A Yor, F Nth, A Ruh, A Vie, A Bel, A Hol Owns Ber, Den, Edi, Hol, Kie, Mun, Vie (7)
 ITALY (Papandrea): Has F Tyr, F Tun, F Ion, F Gre, A Pie, A Tri Owns Gre, Nap, Rom, Tri, Tun, Ven (6)
 RUSSIA (McMullin): Has A Mos, A Ukr, F Nwy, A Fin Owns Mos, Nwy, Swe, War (4)
 TURKEY (McLendon): Has A Ser, F Aeg, A Con, A Sev, F Bla Owns Ank, Bul, Con, Sev, Smy (5)

Despite the fact I do have everybody's moves I've decided to delay this game so Doug McMullin could get a chance to reopen negotiating channels (his moves are dated October). The deadline for Fall 1904 moves is 7:30 PM, Thursday, January 3, 1976.

*

Just a few little quickies. Is it true that the reason some NYC zines are 90% local jokes is that 90% of all New Yorker's are local jokes? Boy, am I going ^{to quick} hell on that one. Another one-- isn't suicide in Buffalo just being redundant? I hope that makes up for the first one. Why am I typing now? It's 3:30 AM, I have a test tomorrow, and a quick glance at the window shows that it's snowing out (Surprise!). good night.....

1975 GH

Spring 1994

THE LITTLE GUYS FIGHT BACK

AUSTRIA (Zimmermann): P Ven-Adr, A Tyr-Ven, A Ser-Tur, A Vie-Gal,
A Gal-Sil, F Gre S Turkish F Con-Aeg
ENGLAND (Barents): F Den S F Hel-Lie, F Hel-Fie, A Yor-Hol, F Nt
S A Yor-Hol
FRANCE (Kovalcik): A Del S English A Yor-Hol, A Pic S Italian
A Rom-Ven, A War S A Pic-Bur, A Bur-Ruh, A Pic-Bur, F Lid-
Wes
GERMANY (Kelly): A Vie-Ruh, A Ruh-Bur, A War S A Ruh-Bur
ITALY (Rubins): F Ion-Eas, A Rom-Ven, F Apr S A Rom-Ven
RUSSIA (Schleicher): A Mos S A Ukr-Sev, A War-Gal, A Ukr-Sev,
F Nwy-Swo
TURKEY (Smith): A Rum S Austrian A Vie-Gal, F Con-Aeg, F Sny-Eas,
A Sev-Ukr, F Bla S A Rum, A Arn-Sev

Underlined moves fail. The German A Fie is dislodged and
must retreat to Ber or OED, and the Turkish A Sev is annihilated.
The deadline for Fall 1993 moves is 7:30 PM, Thursday, January 3,
1976, and they may be made conditional on the German retreat.
JOA's---Dec 16-Jan 1, Mark Zimmermann, 6812 Langston Drive, Austin,
Texas 73723. Dec 14-Jan 3, Richard Kovalcik, 947 56th St., Brook-
lyn, N. Y. 11219

1971 I

Winter 1917-Spring 1918

DO I SWEET PEACE?

GERMANY (Kelly): Build A Vie F Haf S Italian F Tun, F Wes-Tyr,
F Lyo-Pie, A War S F Lyo-Pie, F Spa(sc)-Wes, F Hat-Lie, A Cas-
Spa, A Bur S A Ruh S A Vie-Tun, A Tun-Sil, A Ber S A Pru S
A Tun-Sil, F Del S A Pru, A Fin-Stp, F Stp(nc)-Tyr, F Bot-Liv,
A Kie-Tun
ITALY (Smith): F Tun S German F Wes-Tyr
TURKEY (Phillips): A Mos S A Was S A Liv, A Tus S A Pie, A Gal S
A Boh S A Sil, F Rom S F Nap S F Tyr, F Ion S Italian F Tun,
A Rum-Tyr, F Gre-Alb, A Liv, A Sil, A Tyr, A Ven, F Ede S
F Tyr (unordered) R, 007¹ Shavely executed for evading or-
ders

Underlined moves fail. The deadline for Fall 1918 moves is
7:30 PM, Thursday, January 3, 1976. I have a proposal for a three-
way draw. Please send your votes with your moves and remember
that lack of a vote counts as no. Press follows.

Istanbul: The Sublime Porte is distressed at the interven-
tion of the Great German Reich in the Magreb. However, should
the Reich fail to live up to its stern commitment not to inter-
fere with the liberation of the North African Moslem peoples from
the Italian adventurers the Sublime Porte recognizes that Allah,
in His wisdom, has not seen fit to make our former enemies our
enemies His will in the matter. Accordingly, the Sublime Porte
will be available for all peace negotiations.

AMERICAN PIE
by Len Cool

Chapter DCCLXVI

Synopsis of missing chapters: The Duke of Tarragon has a plan to take over Poland, but it requires the cooperation of the Pope, who is still besieging Cracow under the delusion that it is Jerusalem. Meanwhile, Professor Spigot described in great detail the reproductive system of the jellyfish. In fact, his descriptions were so graphic that Black Hole was seized by the authorities in six states, and within a week the American Neptune reported a 950% rise in retail sales of live jellyfish.

H. Pilchard Vixen, the eminent divorce lawyer, woke up under a light coating of snow. He sneezed. He sneezed because he had a cold. He had a cold because he had been sleeping in ditches. He had been sleeping in ditches because the Pope had taken a wrong turn in Switzerland. Dimly he heard the Pope drawl:

"I never reckoned it got as cold as this in Jeroosulun. It's cold enough to freeze the tail off'n a brass donkey!" As if to confirm his words, the tail of a nearby brass donkey fell with a crash.

Vixen, his teeth chattering, felt obliged to respond. "The meteorological conditions which prevail at the present time, though admittedly circumstantial in nature, offer strong presumptive evidence of a prima facie aberration in our locus standi."

"That's the spirit!" the Pope agreed enthusiastically. "We'll smoke out them Turkeys if it takes fifty years!"

Vixen started to protest but was seized by a fit of coughing.

"I hope ol' Pierre appreciates what we're doin' fer him," added the Pope.

* * *

"Who is Ginkgo Mazurka and why does he want an audience?" asked Pierre the Hideous.

"He is the Mayor of Cracow," explained Marko. "As for what he wants, I haven't the least notion."

"He hasn't the least notion!" shouted Pierre in a rage. "Nobody tells me anything! How can I rule without any intelligence?"

"Exactly what I was asking myself," said Isfahani, and stifled his laughter with a handful of pistachios.

Just then Starko ran into the room, holding up a book. "I got it! I got it!" he cried.

"Give it here," said Pierre, snatching the book and opening it. Swiftly his expression changed. "Dolt!" he cried. "This isn't Forty Delicious Ways to Cook Rats. It's a volume of plays!"

Crestfallen, Starko asked, "Aren't there any recipes at all in it?"

"No," answered the Voivode. "Or wait a minute, I think I saw something about alligators here... what is this?" He began to read aloud.

((over))

Horatio Alligator's
One-Act Plays for Retarded Children

* ADMIRAL BONIFACE'S PARROT *

Characters:

ADMIRAL BONIFACE, late 18th Regiment Horse Marines (the "Floating Parrots"), deceased.
POLEY, his ward.
LORD OVERBEAK, a millionaire who made his pile in pillows ("MacParrot's Peerless Pillows").
LADY OVERBEAK, Lord Overbeak's biggest customer.
GUTHBERT CRACKERS, a jolly good fellow who drives everybody to drink.
J. PENTERTON PERCH, a banker who owns the mortgage on the Boniface homestead.
SAGE, the butler.
MRS. FEATHERS, the housekeeper.
POSTAL CLERK.
ELDERLY GENTLEMAN.
PARROT.

Scene 1: The Post Office.

When the scene begins, the POSTAL CLERK is sorting letters. The ELDERLY GENTLEMAN enters, leaving the door open.

(Author's note: This scene is intended to illustrate post-office etiquette. The fastidious reader will note that every scene in this play has been constructed to be in some way instructive as well as entertaining.)

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN: How do you do?

POSTAL CLERK: How do you do, sir?

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN: Are you the postmaster?

POSTAL CLERK: Why, no, I am only a clerk at present, though I hope that I may, with industry and perseverance, rise in my chosen calling.

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN: I approve your sentiments, for in this land of opportunity, a young man who applies himself diligently, no matter how humble his origins, can seek and eventually attain the highest office in our nation--that of postmaster-general.

POSTAL CLERK: I thank you from the bottom of my heart for these words of encouragement. I am sure it is my greatest ambition to be found worthy someday of that noble position.

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN: If you are truly earnest, there is no reason why you should fail to succeed. How old are you?

POSTAL CLERK: Forty-three, sir.

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN: That is not so old to climb the ladder of success. Remember, Ben Franklin did not become postmaster-general until his seventieth year.

POSTAL CLERK: All employees of the Post Office know that sir. By the way, have I not seen your face somewhere? (points to him)

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN: That is very possible, for my numerous public-spirited activities may well have attracted the attention of the illustrated dailies, though as a modest man I of course would prefer to remain in comparative obscurity.

POSTAL CLERK: Your modesty does you credit, sir, but I have no doubt of your explanation, for I am sure that your face is familiar to me. And now, in what way may I be of service to you?

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN: I should like to send some teddy bears through the mail. (He produces a package.)

POSTAL CLERK: (Takes package.) This is not a very large package. How many teddy bears are inside?

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN: None.

POSTAL CLERK: I fail to apprehend you.

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN: Are you conversant in the language of zoology?

POSTAL CLERK: In all modesty, I may truthfully state that zoology was my best subject in high school.

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN: Then I will put the matter thus: this package contains a number of arachnids about four inches long, lung-breathing and viviparous, having elongated bodies and tails which are capable of inflicting a sting, severe but seldom fatal to human beings...

POSTAL CLERK: Scorpions?? (He drops the package, which emits a furious rattling.)

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN (in a confidential whisper): They don't like to be called that.

POSTAL CLERK: What the hell do you mean, bringing those goddam things in here!? You take your goddam scorpions--(the package rattles angrily)--take your goddam "teddy bears" out of here before I call a cop!

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN: I urge you to quench your indignation, sir, long enough to consult section 124.293d of the mailing regulations.

POSTAL CLERK: What the hell is section 124.293d? (He pulls out a copy of the mailing regulations and locates it.) Here it is. (Reads.) "Live Sco-- er, Teddy Bears. Live teddy bears will be accepted only in the continental surface mail when packaged in a double mailing container, both parts of which are closed or fastened to prevent escape of the teddy bears. The inner container must be plainly marked Live Teddy Bears and must be made of material which cannot be punctured by the teddy bears. The outer container must be of sufficient strength to prevent crushing of the package or exposure of the contents during normal handling in the mail, and also must be plainly marked Live Teddy Bears." I'll be damned!

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN: You will do me the justice to observe that this package of teddy bears satisfies the regulations. (He indicates the upper end of the package, on which is written in block letters "LIVE TEDDY BEARS".)

POSTAL CLERK: (Reads.) "Live Teddy bears." All right, you can mail it. (He scoops up the package and hastily throws it down a mail chute.) Now get the hell out of here!

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN: I am greatly obliged to you for your consideration. (He goes, closing the door behind him. On the door is a sign that reads "Elderly Gentlemen, with the caution--")

Horsing Around Dept.

City police in Charleston, S. C., issued a traffic summons to the driver of a horse-drawn carriage who refused to comply with a new city ordinance requiring horses to wear diapers. David Fuller, operator of the Charleston Carriage Co., Inc., was cited to appear at 9 in the morning in Municipal Court on a charge of failing to diaper his horse. The ordinance went into effect on December 1 but Fuller vowed after his arrest that he would be back on the street with his diaperless horse and buggy.

"I'm never going to put a diaper on my horses," he said.

The City Council approved the measure recently at the urging of Alderman Joseph R. Young, who said businesses complained about the horses. The horse and carriage trade is a tourist attraction in the historic section of the city, and Young said the ordinance will help keep the streets clean. Carriage drivers maintain the diapers will ruin the image of the horse and carriage. Fuller said the idea of diapering a horse is "just plain disgraceful to the horse... silly" and insulting to him and the other carriage drivers.

One driver, trying to abide by the ordinance, is trying to figure out a way to diaper his horse, Fuller said. However that turns out, Police Chief John Conroy said the ordinance will be enforced. Buffalo Courier-Express December 2

But fight Fuller did. He took it to court, and his efforts finally did pay off...

Historic Charleston has given up on the idea of putting diapers on its carriage horses and has arranged for a speed-scoop instead. The issue of horses leaving their droppings on the streets arose last month when one influential citizen called the mayor and demanded he do something about the growing massive pile of horse manure that was collecting in front of his home. At the next City Council meeting, Alderman Joseph Young introduced a resolution to require the city's carriage drivers, who make a living hauling tourists around the 300 year old city, to clean up after their horses. The rest of the council amended that ordinance to require the horses to wear diapers.

But David Fuller, the first carriage driver arrested under the new ordinance, dug in his heels and refused to comply. "A diaper would destroy the dignity a horse should have," Fuller said. "I'm never going to put a diaper on my horse."

The case ended up in court, but a municipal judge continued it until Dec. 29 to give Fuller more time to arrange a defense. Last week, the city agreed not to enforce the new diaper ordinance, but on the condition that the streets are kept clean.

The carriage owners said they had worked out an arrangement whereby they will equip their carriages with two-way radios and when there is the need, they will radio for a clean-up man. The clean-up man will speed to the scene on a motorcycle and will immediately tend to the chore. A good, speedy cleanup, drivers believe, can have the job done in 10 minutes. Buffalo Courier-Express December 7

And would you believe a letter...

ADAM GRUBER, 470 NORTH ST., HARRISON, N. Y. 10523: This short letter is in response to your comment in issue #23 of Black Hole and your comment in issue #3 of Dynasty on other people's comments.

I too feel that a magazine publisher's talent is reflected in his comment and editorial. Quite frankly, I would also find a magazine with absolutely no "babble" boring and probably not worth a sub fee, since it is all "cut and dry" games, strategy articles, or what-have-you. However, I do feel that any comments to be made, serious or not, should be made under an editorial section, much as can be found in Dynasty. Certainly, the best part of the Diplomacy hobby, concerning the magazine part, is the individuality of each and every editor.((!))

Perhaps my editorial on space-filler was not completely understood. I feel that ramblings-on, such as writing linear separators to fill up 6 lines of space because the editor couldn't figure out what the heck to say, is a waste of time, and a cheat on the subscribers. ((Agreed very muchly.)) It is certain that there is a right time and space to put gossip, ideas, brickbats, etc., but this constant Smoky Dragon rolling and linear separators is not a good indication of what the editor can really do. Actually, I don't mind rolling for Smoky Dragons, but I think that Bottled Dragons should get their fair share too.

On a more serious vein, I stand by my original comments concerning twelve pages of garbage--with a few explanations. I often get the strange feeling, when reading Diplomacy magazines, that the editor feels he will get lynched by an angry mob of subscribers if he doesn't print the twelve pages he promised at the beginning of the magazine's existence. Consequently, he starts printing less and less material of what he wanted to say, and more of the magazine is taken up with dumb press ((it's time to--Massacre the Sacred Cow)), or even worse, needless babble. Now, that last statement is a biased one, and I don't expect you or any of your readers to applaud ((all those in favor, raise your left paw)), but I am merely stating my opinion on the matter.

In conclusion, I am really toning down what I stated in my editorial because of your vicious(?) rebuttal. Hopefully, you can take time to print this letter in Black Hole ((consider it done))--which would be the same as printing a page of needless babble.

((First I want to clear up a minor point. I have no particular preference where a publisher puts his "babble". If you like yours in an editorial column, fine, but it can be anywhere as long as it's there.

((Certainly, a lot of space-filler used today is wasteful. I wonder how many of you actually read the linear separators that seem to be the recent rage. Two types of space-filler that I do enjoy much are the news-clipping types featured in Graustark, and the casual, informative paragraphs which some publishers use to fill, say, half a page or less. Look at the response one in Black Hole got! But then again, I'm me, and I know very well what I like, and that's what I wrote.

Well, that's all. This is only the second letter I've had in

response to my editorial. I hope that the third one will be a letter from you.))

Calendar on the Wall

December 31: Liars' Contest, Burlington, Wisconsin. Here's one contest that goes on all year long. All entries for title of Lie of the Year are made by mail to Burlington Liars Club, 309 Henry St., Burlington, Wis. 53105. On the last day of the year, the best fib is announced. The winner gets a year's custody of the Liars Club's gold-plated, diamond-studded medal, "one of the best Woolworth ever sold."

*

Plugs

A very neat little zine that has been coming out for about two years is The Book of Stab, published by Randolph Bart, 3950 Reseda Blvd., #13, Northridge, California 91324. Currently open is a game of 34 player anarchy for a fee of \$1.00, refundable if you get stomped on in the first two years. Subs go for 10/\$2.00. There is very crisp dittoing here and a lot of time and planning must go into the zine layout and production (one look will tell you). Featured are games, press, and anything else interesting to fill the pages out.

Richard Fovalcik publishes a zine that is mostly devoted to old Dewey Diplomacy games called The Tetracuspid. The most recent issue featured zine reviews and games. No subs are available, but he will trade with any publisher who wants to. Richard may be written at Room 304, Bexley Hall, 52 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139. Check page 2 for his temporary COA.

*

Tis the Season to be Jolly Dept.

Brad Carlson says he has one strike against him because he is a door-to-door salesman, "but when you tell them you are from a cemetery, that's two strikes. The hardest part is getting in the door, because the initial reaction is 'No, I'm not interested,'" he said. Even in a tight job market, Carlson says there are few persons who would like to take his job as a "Memorial Counselor." But he says he doesn't sell to grief-stricken survivors, only to those who want to plan ahead to save their family the burden.

The landscaping of cemeteries has changed, he says. Carlson's boss, Thomas Smith, boasts that the Evergreen-Washelli Cemetery for which he works has more species of plants and trees than any of Seattle's parks. Until recently, it had wild deer and still had wild coyotes. "We permit bicycle riding, and I have seen joggers and picnickers in the cemetery," Smith said. "During the past 10 years we have seen a change in people's attitudes toward death," Carlson said. "People get all goosy, but they are open about it."

Nevertheless, there are still a lot of slammed doors, said Carlson as he picked up his materials to begin another day of knocking on doors in the early Christmas season. "It's not an easy month," he said. *Buffalo Courier-Tribune*